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LETTER DATED 23 FEBRUARY 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF CROATIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

The recent statements made by the highest officials of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), and in particular by the Yugoslav President Dobrica Cosic, raise the most serious concern that the authorities in Belgrade are continuing to aggravate the crisis on the territory of the former Yugoslavia.

In this regard I would like to call your attention to a Press Release issued by the "Permanent Mission of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia" (dated 16 February 1993), which contains excerpts from an interview given by Mr. Cosic to the Hungarian media. Mr. Cosic warned that "if Croatia's aggression were spread from Krajina to Slavonija and Baranja and a new front were opened there, then he could not guarantee that the FRY ... would not resort to arms in order to defend the wholeness of its territory".

I must remind you that Slavonija and Baranja are part of the territory of the Republic of Croatia and are inside its internationally recognized borders. Baranja and the eastern part of Slavonija (including the towns of Beli Manastir, Dalj, Vukovar and Ilok) are currently under United Nations protection as UNPA Sector East. Although a cease-fire has been established in this area, Serbian aggression still continues through the forceful expulsion of all the non-Serbian population. Therefore, in spite of the UNPROFOR presence, Croatia regards the UNPA Sector East to be under Serbian occupation. Under such circumstances any insinuation about "Croatia's aggression" is preposterous and can be judged only as part of the FRY (Serbia and Montenegro) attempt to annex that portion of the territory of the Republic of Croatia.

Mr. Cosic also made some remarks concerning the situation in the UNPAs Sector South, stating that "Serbs in Krajina must decide, in a peaceful and democratic manner, if they wish to retain their present republic or not". Officials in the FRY (Serbia and Montenegro) are thus continuing to "recognize" a Serbian "state" in the Republic of Croatia, which is contrary to the policy of the United Nations, CSCE and the entire world community.

Croatia would willingly grant the Serbian population on its soil a high level of local autonomy, but decisively rejects any attempt aimed at the creation of a "Serbian state" inside the borders of the Republic of Croatia.

At the same time Mr. Cosic is rejecting the "old type" of autonomy in Vojvodina because "when a tragic turning-point in the history of the Serbian people had come about, the Hungarians were not paying back for those thirty years with an adequate solidarity". Mr. Cosic is not ready for the autonomy "which excluded Serbia and the Serbian majority from decision making", but is supporting a Serbian "state" at the cost of the territorial integrity of a sovereign United Nations Member country. Such double standards are unacceptable not only from a moral point of view, but also represents a dangerous political anachronism that is threatening European peace and stability.

The Croatian Government firmly supports the United Nations efforts to achieve and strengthen peace in the Republic of Croatia and Republic of the Bosnia and Herzegovina through precise action based upon the plans made by the co-chairmen of the Conference on the Former Yugoslavia. Croatia emphasizes the crucial importance of the Vance plan and the Security Council resolution 769 (1992), especially concerning the return of the refugees, demilitarization of the UNPAs, and imposing tight UNPROFOR control of the Croatian border with FRY (Serbia and Montenegro) and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Croatia as a sovereign United Nations Member State expects that the Security Council will not allow FRY (Serbia and Montenegro) to enjoy the fruits of their aggression, and that will continue to respect in every possible way the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Croatia.

I would kindly request that you have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mario NOBILO
Ambassador
Permanent Representative